Falcons

Falconry is famous in the Middle East and many other countries all over the world. Originally the sport began in 2000 BC in China and central Asia, then it came to Egypt in early times.

Arabs in the Arabian Gulf region, Northern Iraq and Syria have been practicing this sport for nearly 2000 years. They used to capture falcons migrating from central Asia, China and the high mountains of Pakistan, train them how to hunt and then release them after prey, especially the bustard and the plover.  
  
The best places where falcons can be captured, as has been evident lately, is Syria which has become an important falcon capture, training and trading center.   
  
Hunting season in the Gulf region usually starts in and continues throughout the winter. Special fairs are held to display falcons of all kinds of species, sizes and shapes.   
  
Some of the most important species of falcons are Al Hur, Al Shahain, Al Wakri and Al Singari. However, at present only two species are used for hunting i.e. Al Hur and Al Shahain. Al Shahain is bigger than Al Hur and more strong.

The most common prey of the falcons are plovers, bustards, pigeons, mountain quails, snakes, rabbits and sometimes small female deer.

Source: <http://english.mofa.gov.qa/details.cfm?id=74>